

**Remembering PKS, as Teacher, Inspiration, Contributor, Pioneer,  
Crusader, Activist and a Propagator**

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In whom the society saw a strong Will to not to give up his mission of propagating Mathematics for children from all walks of life,

Served till last with great receptivity and reflective thinking,

Infused in everyone of his contacts lot of social sense and civic sense by being highly social minded and civic minded.

His family, students and commoners feel that he still talks to their minds whenever they take a step forward and try to go ahead with their decisions

Most of the student teachers believe that he is ruling their hearts and making them work with passion in their areas of interest as he worked for math education.

He taught many to carry wonder sense, be it in number or nature, throughout their life and lived with wonder sense till last.

*Teacher*

It was his conviction and commitment which he gave 100% to from the day he chose to be a teacher.

He strived hard against all odds in his school to bring out the mathematical core of the children and later the children of the world, treating every child as a potential mathematician.

He was more a facilitator than a teacher and encouraged students to develop the habit of maintaining ‘discovery book’ and ‘doubts book’, making them explore and clear their doubts.

During his service he always trusted his old students and started Number Friends Society, very dutifully involved them in a great activity, worked from the grass-root and the result is before you in the form of two volumes

of Ramanujan Memorial Numbers and Ramanujan Museum and Math Education Center, Royapuram.

He went about his mission of organizing expos from early days of his teaching career by defying all rules of an exhibition in which the student was made a care-taker of the charts made. He had played a great role by contributing to the changes that have taken place today.

He stayed back after school hours to interact with the students who bubbled with enthusiasm, allowed their thought process to take shape so that they could communicate and later put it in writing.

He inspired and fired the imagination of the young minds and simply succeeded in eliminating ‘math phobia’ from the minds of many who were fortunate enough to be his students.

Gifted children were identified and encouraged by him in those days even after they left the school to only ultimately find an esteemed position in the mathematical world.

He remained a teacher till last by teaching the present generation who wanted to be ahead of their syllabus.

### *Inspiration*

His inspiration was Ramanujan and many more who contributed to his thinking through books bought by him using a portion of his salary.

Books were his friends and he was inspired by each book he had bought and persuaded his associates to read the same.

By putting many principles to practice he instilled confidence in our minds that they are not to be written and revered but to be lived for.

His power of persuasion was such that many schools today keep a portion of their budget allocated for library books to buy mathematics enrichment books.

He, as an inspirer and his inspiration, both has left an indelible mark in the minds of the young and the old alike. He has encouraged and inspired many

people even retired people who enjoyed working with numbers for long years only to find unique patterns and a formula to publish it as a book which connects them to many mathematics lovers scattered across the nation.

He persuaded his neighborhood by making them observe the mathematical pattern emerging from '*Kolam*', '*grill gates*', etc. and painted the compound-wall of his residence with mathematical concepts and proved that through mathematical atmosphere this subject can be made very practical and visual treat can eliminate math phobia. He inspired even a neighborhood to temple and that temple has the inscription of its '*Kumbabishekam*' Date magic square on one of its walls in Nanganallur.

### *Contributor*

His contributions to math education in particular and school management in general speak volumes about his life, time and work than his name.

*Inter-school primary algebra festival* organized by University of Madras in P S Senior Secondary School premises was one to be named.

Conceptual understanding through various *examples* and *non-examples* is a must in teaching mathematics. He reiterated it time and again by quoting that '*concepts are caught and not taught*'. True! He religiously went about observing and converting many practical transactions in life to math articles, 100 or more to say and saw them published in English and Tamil dailies the collection which was brought out in book form by NCERT and others. Second Edition of them is awaited.

He had organized workshops on Fuzzy logic and Fractal Geometry for school teachers and exposed them to higher level mathematics and made them organize an expo with their students which are one of its kinds in India.

### *Pioneer*

His pioneering work in the field of math education speaks of his years long work some of which are now taking shape; Why Math Lab? A book to answer the reader's queries and the math kit that comes along with it are being promoted by Ramanujan Museum and Math Education Centre, Royapuram in which he was a resident Curator-Director.

Why should present day student carry the same old Geometry box when so many changes that are taking place in other products are welcome? He had to give a solution to this problem. He introduced a multi-purpose ruler which facilitates in helping the child understand some basic operations and fraction concepts which is a wonderful reinforcement kit that is part of the math kit.

Algebra for 8-year olds was taken up as a project by 10 schools and it was funded by Ministry of Human Resource Development. He worked vigorously to make the math critics and the rest understand how important it was to help the child go through a smooth transition to take up algebra.

He did pioneering work in organizing math camps and proved through every such camp that the mathematical need of the students are quite natural and wanting whether they are from a rural set-up or urban.

‘Culturalization of Mathematics’ – a phrase coined by him helped all age-group people enjoy recreational math by celebrating special dates of their lives through construction of Date Magic Square printed on the Birthday wish cards, Wedding cards, Wedding Anniversary cards, etc., and propagating *Magic Square Dance* to be held in school anniversaries.

No-cost-no-material workshop conducted by him gave a fresh lease of life to the rural children for whom school was a nightmare whenever they think of Mathematics and English.

### *Crusader*

He strongly campaigned for the cause of mathematics without blackboard for school children during their formative years.

He supported various schools which came forward to avail his services and change their ‘math climate’ by even staying for days in some schools.

Book allowance for the teachers and participation of teachers in math education conferences and workshops were dear to him and he communicated this in schools he visited, wrote articles and organized workshops and conferences throughout his life long work for math education.

In his early teaching life he championed for the students with originality who were treated like the rest in their schools and nurtured their curiosity by making them solve many non-routine problems.

*Activist*

He severely protested to ban a film that showed a teacher in a poor manner. That serious he was about teaching which is considered a noble profession.

He objected to ‘home tuitions for every school going kid’ and said that if a student does not understand what the teacher says it is not because he/she is not good at it; it is because the teacher is not efficient enough to try various other methodologies that facilitate his/her understanding.

He defended gifted children uncared for and having appetite to learn higher concepts by making various school managements give vent to their mathematical ability and recognize them through outstanding prizes.

*Propagator*

He was a thorough propagator of ‘conference culture’.

He made available best math titles by releasing a catalogue on that occasion working in collaboration with the publishers and the book sellers.

He propagated the idea of mobile math van.

Invited math teachers to be resource persons to travel all over the country and propagate various methodologies through hands-on-kickoff-take off kits.

Organized state-level conference in ‘kolam and mathematics’ and exposed the school teachers to application mathematics.

Propagated math expos and three-day-three-tier math exhibition

His idea of collecting packing materials of various products, various sizes of paper strips from printing presses, plastic containers, bottle lids, use and throw cups etc. made a good resource bank to be utilized while introducing math concepts. IMRB (Improvised Material Resource Bank) as he called it

made many corporation and govt. school teachers empowered with best available no-cost teaching aids.

He was unique in spreading the message ‘math is beauty’ to the public by painting simple math concepts in gates, compound wall, staircase steps. He erected a math formula using grill on the outer wall of his house which he explained as having all the properties of a number.

He did not believe in the theory that men are for mathematics and women for languages and so he had photos of mathematicians of both the gender which made him bring out the best from both.

He was patient enough to get across his thoughts so his propagation is still valid because his patience in waiting for the changes to take place in teaching mathematics and pursuance is working wonders inside many a school compound.

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My father organized a 'State Level Kolam and Mathematics' conference at Ramanujan Museum and Math Education Centre and brought many Resource Persons from IIT, Chennai, Ms. Vijayalakshmi(AMTI) and it was a successful program bringing out lot of new ideas from the participants.